



WHO ARE THE 144,000?

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Revelation chapter 7 – the past few sermons – and to tell you the truth, they’ve all been a part of a series – about 4 sermons ago there was a program entitled “[Few Are Chosen](#),” and I tried to point out in that message that no one comes to Jesus unless their called by God the Father. That’s what Jesus told us in the Book of John. And we read many examples where the idea of you being called, or invited, or chosen, or elected, or selected, that *that* is a Biblical statement.

And then, we eventually talked about pillars in the Kingdom of God. And I mentioned that the very first most important, biggest, strongest, pillar of them all is Jesus Christ! And with that, God the Father!

And then we read Scriptures which talked about King David, some day will be resurrected and will be king over all Israel. A *physical* nation, of *physical* people living on the earth in a future time. And then we read Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets will be in the Kingdom of God. And I have to believe that they will all have very important administrative jobs and will be indeed pillars in the Kingdom of God – the government of God.

And then we read Scriptures about the twelve disciples, who when they became the twelve apostles, that they would be someday ruling over the different tribes of Israel. Twelve apostle – twelve tribes. Each one would be ruling over the portion of that family. And, we mentioned other verses. However, I've been promising you that I was gonna go over and discuss with all of you some of my thoughts about Revelation and the concept of the 144,000. I must say, I've never heard a good sermon about it. There was a man – once upon a time – and I had a lot of respect for him. But I heard him in private, I don't know if he said it in public, but, I heard him say it in private that he thought the 144,000 were “last minute repenters,” and they were people who got informed about God through *his* preaching. Now, I thought that was off base. And, in other sermons I've pointed out that in the Book of Revelation you never hear the phrase a “last minute repent.” But in truth there are four or five verses that as *this* world gets worse – the end-time curses of God increase on this earth – that individuals actually, their heart grows harder! And more rebellious against God! And that they just refuse to repent. So, I don't think “last minute repenters” is a Biblical concept. In all due respect to the man who said that, and a man who I still deeply admire. He's long since been in his grave – for fifteen years!

But I want to give you some of my thoughts about the 144,000. If you would, turn to chapter 7 of Revelation.

Verse 1 – “After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. 2) Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom was granted to harm [or to damage the earth, as my margin says] ... and the sea, 3) saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’”

Now, to me, the implication is, ‘don’t do any of this stuff until we make sure they possess God’s Spirit.’ So, these are people who through Bible study, and prayer, and repentance, and baptism, and the laying on of hands, receive God’s Spirit.

Verse 4 – “And I heard the number of those who were sealed. **One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed.**” – So, these people have direct lineage with the tribes of Israel.

And he mentions JUDAH twelve thousand.

Reuben twelve thousand.

Gad twelve thousand.

Asher twelve thousand.

Naphtali twelve thousand.

Manasseh twelve thousand.

Simeon twelve thousand.

Levi twelve thousand.

Issachar twelve thousand.

Zebulun twelve thousand.

Joseph [or you might say Ephraim] twelve thousand.

Benjamin twelve thousand.

Notice that Dan was not in that group. Dan, is most likely the people of Ireland. And, they are sort-of hard-headed, and sort-of pugnacious – they want to fight, they want to argue. And at the present time – and for a long time – they have been totally bound-up in bondage to the Roman Catholic Church.

Now, I once upon a time heard people in a church group – ministers, preachers, teachers – try to say that all of these conversions would take place in the end-time. And it just did not ring correct. Remember the ‘simplicity which is in Christ’!? But, eventually my mind was allowed to consider the following:

What if, back in the first century – there very easily could have been 12,000 of the people of Judah. Because that's where Jesus lived, that's where He taught, that's where Paul and the apostles taught. So, it's very conceivable that there were twelve thousand people, and maybe from Levi twelve thousand people, and Benjamin – all back, literally two thousand years ago.

And, maybe, as we went forth into time, as the truth of God spread up into nations of Europe, where many of these tribes ended up, that over those two thousand years – a few *here*, a few *there* – you had all of these other tribes have people that came into the Body of Christ. And maybe they didn't even know they were part of, say, Naphtali. And notice Manasseh there. We believe that's greatly associated with the United States. Well now, let's go on.

Verse 9 – “After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, **clothed with white robes**, with palm branches in their hands, 10) and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, *and* to the Lamb!’” – remember, “God” is *Theos*, here's one more verse that, I think pretty well proves that God the Father *will be with* Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of God, with the blowing of the seventh trump! Now, is that five years from now, or fifty years from now!? I don't know, but, it's a lot closer now than when I first heard the truth of God fifty-years ago!

Well, what do we have here!? Over that span of two-thousand years there were 12,000 people from each of the tribes of Israel that were given access to become a part of the Body of Christ. And they're called ‘the 144,000.’ Now, keep that in mind, because we're gonna go to another chapter to learn some more.

But we also just read that there would be ‘a great multitude’ of people. ‘All nations, tribes, peoples, and languages’ that for two thousand years – and even people *before* Jesus Christ - that were servants of God – they're going to be in the Kingdom of God. However, they don't have the same identity or the same responsibility that the 144,000 have.

Verse 11 – All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12) saying: ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.’

13) Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?’”

Now, *this* is where that old church group, I think, got confused. Let’s look at the next verse.

Verse 14 – “And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ And he said to me, [and I’m gonna read it in the King James English] ‘These are they which *came* out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”

Now, that older organization of which “Bubble Boys” grandfather and father were a part of, they taught, “See – Aha! All of these people are coming about the time of ‘the Great Tribulation!’” Well, it doesn’t say ‘*the* great tribulation.’ It just says, ‘they’re gonna come through a lot of troubles.’ But, also, if you do a little reading and studying, you can figure out that *that* word “came” is not really correct. It’s looking into the future, and so the verb tense actually should have been ‘these are they which WILL COME OUT OF’ – that preposition. Prepositions in the Bible are much more interchangeable than our prepositions. In our prepositions, in this age, they’re very specific. I could say, “I am going to walk *through* that door.” I could also say, “I am going to walk *near* that door.” I can say, “I am going to walk *by* that door.” “*Around* that door.” Each of our English prepositions has a pretty specific meaning. But, the best that I can figure out as I’ve tried to study the language, that the prepositions back in the Greek language, were much more nebulous. So, when you see the word “out of” it just as easily could be “after.” And so this verse *could* be read as follows: “These are they which will come after great tribulation.” Well, think about it. When is the resurrection!? And, the end-time events!? These people will come AFTER tribulation – they will go through an awful lot of horrible things in the end-times, and maybe not even the end-times, if you were in the Middle Ages and the plague was all around you – you were in tribulation. There might have been other groups who were attacked because of your religion – maybe some of those people were killed because of their religion – they came after hard times to be entered into the Kingdom of God.

He goes on to say, “...’and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”

So, they are Church members. They are members of the Body of Christ.

Verse 15 – “Therefore they are [or, they *will be*; they’re not there now, but in the future] before the throne of God, ...”

And so, the verse in King James English, I don’t think the tense of the verbs are correct. And I think it could just as well mean, “Therefore they **WILL BE** before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.”

Verse 16 – “They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the Sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17) for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters And God [Theos] will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Again, I think *this* is referring to that great innumerable multitude. People, throughout history, going through the struggles of their life. As Paul said, ‘all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.’ But they finally make it into the Kingdom of God!

Now, let’s turn to Revelation chapter 14. As with most things in the Bible, you have a little information *here*, you have a little information *there*. Here a little, there a little. You don’t get it all in one spot.

Verse 1 – “Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion [New Jerusalem], **and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand**, ...” – this is the same group we read about back in chapter 7. Twelve-thousand from each of the tribes of Israel. “...having His Father’s name written on their foreheads. 2) And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps ...” – that’s where a lot of those Protestants get their harp stuff from.

3) They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand [WHICH HAD BEEN] redeemed from the earth. ...” – so these are *former* human beings that have been resurrected, they are now with Jesus Christ. And they are in *a special category*. They’re

not in the category of the great innumerable multitude. They appear to have a higher status. And a higher purpose.

Verse 4 – “These are the ones who were not defiled *with women*, ...” – now, does that mean they never had sexual relationships when they were human? Or, does it mean they were *not stained by false religion*!? They had never allowed false religion to misguide them.



U.S. President Ronald Reagan Cabinet - 1984

“...for they are virgins. ...” – again, I think, he’s talking spiritually. They never got caught-up in the morass of modern-day so-called Christianity. Now, next, this is very important. “...**These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.** These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 5) And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.”

Let's go back to Verse 4 again, "...These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes." – it is my interpretation, at the present time – it is my belief, my understanding – that these one hundred and forty-four thousand are sort-of like what we would call "the Cabinet" – advisor's to the president. And I think these one hundred and forty-four thousand have a similar role, but there's many more of them. They are with Jesus Christ, they go wherever He goes! When you think about the president – when he takes a trip, he's got all these people that are on the trip with him. Some people protect him, some people advise him, some people are his spokes-people. And, I just get the feeling that this hundred and forty-four thousand has the same type of role. That they are indeed pillars in the Kingdom of God! They go wherever Jesus goes! Now, think about that. It doesn't say that about the innumerable multitude. Which they're happy because they're in the Kingdom of God, and, they very well should be, but the hundred and forty-four thousand they're accomplishments were *more*. Their status is higher. They are in the inner circle of the government of God.

And it says, "these were redeemed from among men," so they're not angelic beings. "Being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb," so they're resurrected at the return of Jesus. Jesus the first of the firstfruits and then those that follow.

This hundred and forty-four thousand – is it Jehovah's Witnesses!? I'm just thinking, do they think they're the hundred and forty-four thousand!? Yes, and I think different church groups in the past say, "Aha! There we are! That's where God is talking about us!" No, He's talking about people – some were alive in the first century, some were alive in the second-century, and so on and so-forth. Some are alive right now in the twentieth and the twenty-first century! Some of these people may be people like you and me!? I hope we are! I hope that we – could be given a reward of this high caliber! And it goes on to say, "in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God." These people have lived exceptional lives of dedication to Jesus Christ!

There's a verse I want to turn to in the Book of Revelation near the end – Revelation chapter 22, verse 12 – "**And behold, I AM coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his [or her] work.**" – now, remember, we had read another parable, I think last week, some people in the Kingdom gets rulership over ten cities, some over five. And the

one guy that just didn't make use of God's gift's at all, he lost his, and he probably lost out his opportunity for eternal life!? But, when Jesus returns He... it says here, let's read it again, **"And behold, I AM coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, ..."** – the reward is not eternal life! Eternal life is a gift! We don't earn it. Jesus Christ gives it to us. However, the job that we will hold in the Kingdom is a type of reward. And there are other Scriptures that are of a similar idea.

At the resurrection of the seventh trump those that have been given the gift of eternal life will meet Jesus in the atmosphere. But most of those people will just be in the great mass – the innumerable multitude. They have eternal life, but they don't have a high reward. But a few people – this hundred and forty-four thousand – these are people who have lived through history, descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel, with the exception of Dan, and they are given a great reward! As it said back in Revelation chapter 14 – they "were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with [false religion]," and are spiritually speaking, "virgins." They have had one God, and one God only! Jesus Christ! "These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes." Can you think of a better reward!?

Now, people like us, we're not going to be a king over Israel. That job is already taken, David. We're not going to have the job that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph will have. Or, the prophets. We're not going to have the job which the twelve apostles will have. Now, you think about Paul. What's his job in the Kingdom!? I can't prove it, and there are no verses that tell us this, but one time we are told that Paul was called "the apostle to the Gentiles." It is possible that Paul might very well be on the same level as King David, where King David is king over all Israelites. Is it possible that Paul will be the king and the leader – the supreme commander as it were – over all the Gentiles!? I think that's a possibility!

And this hundred and forty-four thousand, throughout the ages, from the twelve tribes of Israel, they were extra special devotees to Jesus and to His truth! They served Him in their lifetimes, but more importantly, they will have this very high *cabinet like* position in the government of God!

Now folks, that is within our opportunity to have! If we dedicate our life to Jesus Christ, if we serve Jesus Christ, if we serve our fellow human being!

There are people right now who are reading this that might very well be in that very elite advisory role – like the cabinet officials; they work right at the White House, they are with the president all the time. And these people will be with Jesus Christ wherever He goes. If He says someday, “Folks, I think we’re gonna travel to what was once called the United States of America, and start deciding how We’re going to develop that land again.” And, all of a sudden, wherever Jesus goes here goes the hundred and forty-four thousand. And they’re transported there. And, they are advising, their looking, their surveying. I think the possibilities are endless. But I do believe the hundred and forty-four thousand are a very elite group of future resurrected saints.

And I think they will definitely be pillars in the Kingdom of God!

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